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1881

A Play, in Five Acts.

THE

Gold Mine.

BY

IRENE ACKERMAN.

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THE GOLD MINE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MRS. VIRGINIA DESMOND.

MISS BESSIE GRANGER.

KITTY.

MR. COVERT.

FRED CLANCEY.

MR. SYLVESTER.

BOB.

JOHN L. SIMPKINS.

CRAZY GEORGE. }

MR. DESMOND. }

FOREMAN.

MINERS.

NOTARY AND CLERKS.

Costumes: Modern.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Parlor in Mr. Covert's villa on the Hudson.* KITTY
discovered looking at herself admiringly in the mirror.

Kitty. There! "If I only had money," as my mistress says, wouldn't I have any number of beaux? Kitty, you're a very pretty, pretty, pretty girl (*makes a curtsey before the mirror*) You have beautiful eyes, splendid hair.

Enter Bob.

Bob. Kitty, is that you?

Kitty. Oh! how you frightened me!

Bob. You talk so loud. I heard the voice outside, and I looked in to see who it was.

Kitty. What did you hear, smart?

Bob. "Pretty, pretty, pretty; splendid hair."

Kitty. I was repeating what somebody said to me.

Bob (in a rage). Tell me who said that.

Kitty. None of your business—there!

Bob. I'll make it my business. If I find him out he won't tell it to you again.

Kitty. He will. He! It ain't only one he that says that to me (*counts on her fingers*). There's the tall one, that's one; the fat one, that's two; the lean one, that's three; the big one, that's four; the little one, that's five; the handsome one, that's six; the one with the monstache, that's seven; the one with the whiskers, that's eight; the soldier is nine; somebody I won't tell is ten; and two more that are coming Sunday night makes a dozen, this week.

(*Bob going up and down the stage distracted. KITTY following close behind, business with apron, makes motions as if driving geese.*)

Kitty. Sho! sho! sho! sho! sho!

Bob. What are you doing?

Kitty. Driving a goose to the madhouse.

Bob (sinks in a chair). Woman, you trifle with a man's heart, that bleeds a cupful every minute with your cruelty.

Kitty. A man's heart—a fool's mug; making ugly faces and talking nonsense.

Bob. O Kitty, have pity! you make me feel dreadful; your cruelty fills my eyes with water.

Kitty. Take five cents' worth of Rochelle salts every morning till you have spent all your wages; that will clear your eyesight. Get up out of that chair and help me to tidy up the parlor.

Bob (arranges furniture, stops, turns around, and sees KITTY in a chair reading). Kitty, don't be so cross. Say one sweet word.

Kitty. No.

Bob. Just smile once. (*KITTY smiling, puts the book down.*) Now you look sweet.

Kitty. I wasn't smiling at you; I was thinking of what my mistress said this morning.

Bob. What was it?

Kitty. She said, "What a funny world this is."

Bob. I've heard many a-one say that.

Kitty. You're so smart. Did you ever hear any one say what she next said?

Bob. What was it?

Kitty. That the washer on the North Pole must be loose; for this world was wabbling and didn't turn smooth—that nothing goes right now—and no one gets what they want.

Bob. I know what I want, and I can't get it.

Kitty. You want sense, and you never will get it.

Bob. I'd give all the sense of the seven wise men to get something that I want.

Kitty. Oh! indeed.

Bob. Yes, indeed.

Kitty. Is it money?

Bob. No; it ain't money.

Kitty. What is it?

Bob. Don't you know? Guess!

Kitty. Chicken pie? (*Bob shakes his head*). Hot buns? (*shakes his head*). New clothes? (*shakes his head*). Candy? (*shakes his head*). Hair oil?

Bob (getting in a rage). Hair oil?

Kitty. Yes! You want that to keep your hair smooth: it stands up like corn-stalks in a field.

Bob. Well, if it does, it is all my own; 'tain't bought like yours.

Kitty. My hair bought? May be you'll say my complexion is bought, too, you stuffed fool! You don't know what's good when you see it.

Bob. Yes, I do. Don't get mad; I didn't mean it.

Kitty. May be you'll say I'm ugly next?

Bob. You're handsomer than a peach.

Kitty. No I ain't; my hair is bought. (*Pouts*.)

Bob. No it ain't.

Kitty (still pouting). Why did you say so, then?

Bob. Because you abused my hair.

Kitty. And I will again. (*Bell rings outside.*) There, my mistress wants me.

Bob. I want you more than any body in the world. (*Bell rings again.*) Oh! let her wait.

Kitty. But she wants me.

Bob. But I want you so bad, I'll die, or drown myself if I can't get you.

Kitty. To wait on you?

Bob. No! (*getting closer to Kitty*) but for me to wait on you—I'll only ask you to do one thing—that you must be doing always.

Kitty. What's that?

Bob. Only this (*attempting to kiss her.* *KITTY slaps his face.* *Bell rings again.* *KITTY runs—stops—turns.*)

Kitty. Carry that, and sell it at the shop where I bought my hair (*makes faces at him*). [*Exit KITTY.*]

Bob (*rubbing his cheek*). Don't she hit hard, and don't she look pretty.

Enter FRED.

Fred. Don't who look pretty?

Bob. Miss Bessie, sir (*goes to the window*); look at her chasing that pony. (*FRED looks out the window.*) Ain't that a picture? Don't my young lady look pretty, sir?

Fred. Bob, you're a good fellow; there's a dollar for you. I think I'll go and help her to catch the pony. Bob, were you ever in love?

Bob. "Was I ever in love?"—Why I'm in love now.

Fred. If you are, don't make an ass of yourself by talking so loud. Come here! Will you stick by me? Here's another dollar.

Bob. I like that. (*Holds out his hand.*) More sticking plaster.

Fred. There's another dollar.

Bob. (*still holding out his hand.*) Another one. And I'll stick like Cooper's glue.

Fred. No more for the present.

Bob. Well, I'll stick three dollars' worth—stick one week for three dollars.

Fred. I'll give you three dollars every week.

Bob. Then I'll stick by the week. I'm stuck to you for the first week ; stuck close. What is it, Mr. Fred ?

Fred. Bob ! I love Miss Bessie. Help me, Bob, and if I win her I'll raise your wages.

Bob. Then take my advice and don't tell her her hair is bought ; it's dreadful bad luck to tell them their hair is bought.

Fred. Oh, shut up and listen to me.

Bob. That's a nice way to treat a three-dollar man that's sticking as close to you as a postage stamp, and will carry you through as safe.

Fred. Bob, I love Miss Bessie ; I love her dreadfully ; I have loved her ever since I was a boy.

Bob. I know that, many a time when you were a little fellow you made me skin my shins climbing the trees to get the biggest apples for you to give her when you went to school ; and many a time you walked the legs off of me following you and her, while you children rode round and round the lawn on the little Shetland ponies, and since then, haven't you kept me running to her with everything in the world ?

Fred. I loved her when a child, when a boy at school, and vacation ; when at college, all my poetry I wrote to her ; all my hopes I placed upon her, and now, since I am a man, I worship her. If any one was to come between me and her it would kill me, for then life would be worthless.

Bob. If I was a ladies' waiting maid, and Miss Bessie was the lady, and I was the maid, I think she'd tell me them very same words about you, and I think she'd give me six dollars a week instead of three to stick close to her, for fear some other young lady would cut her out.

Fred. Do you think that ?

Bob. I do ; but if you'll make it six dollars instead of three I'll swear to it, Master Fred.

Fred. I won't pay three dollars for swearing. Bob, you're too fond of money ; tell them to have my horse ready in an hour.

[Exit BOB.]

(FRED goes to the window; looks out). I can't see her; she must be hidden by the trees. (*Sits in chair looking out of window.*)

Enter BESSIE L. C.

Bessie (sits down, fanning herself with her hat). Oh! I am so tired. Pony was so full of fun this morning—he loves a run as well as I do. (*Turns and sees FRED.*) You there?

Fred. Good morning, Bessie; you and the pony had a run?

Bessie. And such a run. Pony would not let me catch him; he ran round and round the grass plat, in and out under the trees, until at last I had to stop for breath, then the darling little fellow came and put his head over my shoulder for his piece of sugar.

Fred. Do you give him sugar?

Bessie. Only one lump every morning.

Fred. Bessie, are you not too big now to be chasing a pony?

Bessie. Why shouldn't I play with him? I know he is old now, and I am too heavy for him to carry me as he used to do when we were children, but I love him more, and he loves me a great deal more than he did when I was a little girl, and I love him besides because——

Fred (leaning over her chair). Because what? because I gave him to you, is that it?

Bessie (looking down). Yes.

Fred. And I am like the pony; I love you a great deal more than when you were a little girl—ever so much more—so much more that words can't tell you. All my life I have loved you. Bessie, darling, I could not exist without loving you. Bessie, dear, won't you let me love you forever?

Bessie. Forever.

Fred. Forever and ever, and ever?

Bessie. Yes.

Fred. My own forever. (*Bessie rests her head on his shoulder, his arm around her waist.*) And be my own—my wife?

Bessie (in same position). Yes, dear.

(*Enter, R. C., MRS. VIRGINIA DESMOND. Stops looking at them.*)

Mrs. D. (aside.) They are so happy—I won't disturb them.
[*Exit Mrs. D.*]

Enter BOB.

Bob. The horse. [BESSIE *exits.* *Runs off left.*]

Fred. Confound you, what do you want?

Bob. Come to tell you your horse is ready, sir.

Fred. Hang you and the horse. [*Exit FRED.*]

Bob. That's what a man gets for sticking close at three dollars a week. [*Exit BOB.*]

Enter, R. C., Mrs. DESMOND.

Mrs. D. (looking after BESSIE). Gone! Will she ever be as happy again? She is a true-hearted, noble girl; too good, far too good, for that vain, selfish, conceited, masculine nothing. Yet she believes in that man's love. Once I was as trustful, once I had faith in men. Now I believe in nothing—(*takes out miniature; speaking to it*)—except in you, my darling, oh! my husband, be you alive or dead. None can ever shake my faith in you, my lost one. But is he dead? Covert would have me think so. I pretend to believe him. Something tells me my darling is not dead. To that hope I cling. But, oh! the anguish of this uncertainty! Here am I, once more Covert's guest. The last time I was here, my husband and my money vanished. Where, I know not. How, I know not, except that Desmond went West to purchase something from somebody. Now I am here to know, and know it all I will. Covert, I feel—aye, feel—to you I owe my loss of husband, lover, gold. I will strike you thro' that gold you worship. Gold is power. Gold! gold! oh! how I love that word gold? Oh! how I love to hear men talk to me of gold!

Enter MR. FRANCIS COVERT.

Mr. C. (bowing.) Good morning! You're looking charming, Mrs. Desmond—ladies that look well so early in the morning prove their charms are their own.

Mrs. D. (laughing.) Gentlemen that are so complimentary so early prove their charms are more than their own, and are so ex-

quisitely agreeable that we lose sight of their insincerity while listening to the music of their address.

Mr. C. I wish that my address might ever be music to your ears.

Mrs. D. (laughing.) And is it not? Indeed I do not know which most to admire, the beauty of the instrument or the sounds that come from it.

Mr. C. I wish I could believe that either of them really pleased you.

Mrs. D. Indeed, they both do.

Mr. C. (getting closer to her.) Which do you like the best—the instrument or the music? (*Taking her hand.*)

Mrs. D. Like a grand piano, they are both perfect.

Mr. C. The instrument may be ever so fine, but it depends on the player whether it produces discord or harmony. I have heard some very discordant sounds come from the grandest instrument.

Mrs. D. So have I; and I pitied the splendid piano, and thought that if it could speak it would say to the player, "Leave me alone! go away! get an accordeon! you don't understand me!" Then I've imagined its delight when a Liszt touched its keys and produced its power, the soul-entrancing power that, while it speaks, makes thousands breathlessly listen, filling the senses with emotion and the heart with joy.

Mr. C. If I was the piano and you the player all my best qualities would come forth in brightness and even my faults be tuned to merits.

Mrs. D. I fear I lack the skill to play on such a grand piano.

Mr. C. Your modesty bespeaks your merits. Will you not play just one piece this morning?

Mrs. D. (laughing.) I have no notes to play from.

Mr. C. I will give you all the notes you wish, if you will only play.

Mrs. D. (laughing.) I am very hard to please—the score must be very heavy to suit my taste.

Mr. C. In the hundreds?

Mrs. D. That will do for beginners; I am more classical in my selections.

Mr. C. In the thousands.

Mrs. D. (laughing). That depends on the length of the bar.

Mr. C. I fear you would require a prince for your composer.

Mrs. D. That or a banker; (*looking at him meaningly*) or a great man who is very lavish with other peoples' notes.

Mr. C. You would despise such a musician.

Mrs. D. Say, rather, I would choose him in preference to others—any one can be prodigal with their own. The commonest man can do this, but it takes the greatest talents, and the finest skill to procure the notes of others, and having obtained them to use them so as to make the world honor the holder. To do this it requires a braver man than Wellington, a more ambitious man than Napoleon, and a greater dreamer than Festus. If I had such a man's confidence, I could worship him—if——

Mr. C. (eagerly). "If——," say on.

Mrs. D. (laughing). If he gave me some of the notes.

Mr. C. (affectionately). Would you assist him to get them, so he might share them with you?

Mrs. D. Would I? yes, aye! that I would; I'd work with him day and night; plan, devise, conceive, help, assist, aid, and combine with him to drain the world of all its precious ores, and make each coin, each golden coin, fall in the hands of he and I. The rain of that golden shower would be sweeter to me than all the music of the spheres.

Mr. C. Grand—splendid woman! The only one I ever saw that understood me. From this time out we are one—one in object—one in plans—one in interest.

Mrs. D. Will you prove your sincerity?

Mr. C. Ask what you will to prove it.

Mrs. D. Give me ten thousand dollars as a first dividend of the association.

Mr. C. I will bring it to you myself.

Mrs. D. Order your carriage; I will drive to the bank with you; I think a ride would benefit me. (*Mr. C. rings.*)

Enter Bob.

Mr. C. Tell them to have the carriage got ready at once.

Mrs. D. Tell Kitty I want her.

Mr. C. Go and get ready, and allow me to drive you as far as the bank (*kissing her hand*) to give you the money.

PICTURE.

END ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Same parlor.* BESSIE discovered sitting on the sofa with a novel in her lap, thinking.

Enter FRED.

Fred goes on tiptoe behind BESSIE, leaning over, kisses her.
BESSIE starts.

Bessie. Oh! (*Smiling—looking up in his face.*)

Fred. What was my Bessie thinking of?

Bessie. Of that beautiful place you showed me. How I wish it was ours.

Fred. I have made inquiries about it since then.

Bessie (eagerly). Have you? And did you buy it?

Fred. No, dear. We cannot afford it.

Bessie. "Afford it?" Haven't we money enough to buy it?

Fred. Yes—but we would want a good deal of money to keep up such a place; it would take an income of at least thirty thousand dollars a year. And you know, dear, we must have money to live on; what you and I have got is only a little bit over one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and they are asking almost that for the place.

Bessie (pettishly). But I want it so badly.

Fred. What am I to do, dear? Would you have me pay all you and I have for a mansion and grounds? After we bought it what would we live on?

Bessie (peevishly). I don't know; I want that place.

Fred. We can buy beautiful places for one-fourth the money.

Bessie (impatiently). I want that place.

Fred. Darling, be reasonable ; that place was built by a millionaire, who is now a bankrupt. It was one of the extravagances that hastened his ruin, and I do not want it to ruin my Bessie.

Bessie. How could it ruin us when we owned it ?

Fred. Because then we would have to live in a style beyond our means—or be the laughing-stock of the country.

Bessie (irritably). “The laughing-stock?” Why should we when we own so splendid a place ?

Fred. Because then, dear, that’s all we would own, and we couldn’t even furnish it. Just think of receiving visitors in those grand saloons, with no carpets to the floors or curtains to the windows, with a few common chairs and perhaps a hair-covered sofa, to receive company in a grand empty house ; that’s why we would be a “laughing-stock,” and I do not want to have my Bessie appear ridiculous.

Bessie. “Appear ridiculous !” indeed !

Fred. But, darling, don’t you see it would require the income of a prince to——

Bessie. But you are better than a prince.

Fred. My darling ?

Bessie. Won’t you buy me that place, dear ?

Enter R. C. MRS. DESMOND and MR. COVERT.

Mrs. Desmond. Planning for the fairy castle. (*Approaches Bessie*). Have your own way, dear—make him do whatever you want—both before and after marriage.

Mr. C. (sits). Women generally do that, and of course that was what Bessie was doing.

Bessie. I was only trying to have him get me something, and he won’t.

Mrs. D. Refusing so early ?

Fred. Not refusing—but trying to keep her from injuring herself.

Mrs. D. That is the way all you men talk ; you treat us as if we were infants. (*To Bessie.*) Have your own way, dear, whatever it is.

Mr. C. What’s all this about—not quarreling I hope.

Fred. No, indeed—were we, Bessie.

Bessie. Quarreling ! what an idea ! I wanted Fred to buy that beautiful place I saw last night for us to live in. Fred says we can't afford it—that we haven't money enough. Oh ! Why haven't we money enough ?

Mrs. D. A great many people in the world are asking the same question, dear.

Bessie (weaved.) Surely you do not. Gaurdy there (*Pointing towards Mr. Covert*) said you was the greatest business woman he ever met ; that you had made more than one hundred thousand dollars in—in what did you call it, Gaurdy ?

Mr. C. In mining stocks, dear.

Bessie. Yes, in mining stocks, since you have been here, and that is not two months.

Mrs. D. Gaurdy should not tell tales out of school.

Bessie. And if you did, who are a woman—why can't Fred do it, who is a man ; and smarter than any woman ?

Mrs. D. Very true, my dear.

Fred. Bessie, you don't know anything about such things.

Mr. C. If you ladies will retire Fred and I will see if we cannot devise some way for him to make money enough to buy that place for Bessie, and perhaps a little over.

Bessie (goes up behind Mr. C., throwing her arms around his neck.) That's a dear good Gaurdy.

Mrs. D. Come, Bessie, let us take a stroll and leave business to these gentlemen ; they have longer heads than us.

Bessie. Don't be long, Fred.

[*Exit BESSIE and MRS. DESMOND.*]

Mr. C. Come, come. Don't let this put you out so.

Fred. But she is worse than a child. The idea to buy such a house as that—where would I get the money ?

Mr. C. Go to work and get the money like a man.

Fred. How can I ? It is ridiculous to think of it.

Mr. C. No, it is not. Look at Mrs. Desmond. As Bessie told you, she has made over a hundred thousand dollars with mining stocks in two months.

Fred. You mean somebody else did it for her.

Mr. C. Well, certainly, I had something to do with it.

Fred. I thought so—you mean, it was you that did it for her.

Mr. C. No, I only showed her what to do. She took my advice, she happened to be very fortunate. She had the ready money and took advantage of an unusual condition of the market—one that may not occur again in fifty years.

Fred. I wish I had the same chance.

Mr. C. You cannot have the same, but I'll tell you one that looks as good.

Fred. What is it?

Mr. C. You and Bessie are both of age. While I was your guardian I took good care of the property. You will do me the justice to say that when you both became of age I turned over to each of you more money than your uncle had left. This I did by wise investments, by which I not only paid for your support and education, but gave you both many expensive advantages.

Fred. Bessie and I, sir, are much indebted to you for the care you have taken of our property.

Mr. C. I did only my duty, and what I do every day for our customers at the bank. But you are not children now. I have nothing more to do with your money, nor do I wish to advise you what to do with it.

Fred. I wish you would advise me about what we were speaking.

Mr. C. I have no advice to give; but I will show you a business transaction, which you, as a business man, can consider or not as you choose.

Fred. I shall be glad, sir, to hear it. What is it?

Mr. C. We are not talking as friends now—if I tell you, and after considering it, you accept, I will expect to share in the profits.

Fred. Let me hear what it is and then I can decide.

Mr. C. You are a civil engineer and well posted in metallurgy and that kind of thing.

Fred. It's true, I may say, that I am well up in the books, and have attended lectures in that line. I stood very well in my class when I graduated in the School of Mines. I have a diploma from a college that stands high everywhere, but you must recollect, sir, that I have had no practical experience, though, of course, I know more than mere workers.

Mr. C. Of course you do, and because you do that is why I am going to lay this matter before you. I have heard of a mining property which is said to be very rich; it may be a bonanza, or a lot of old rocks; I don't know, but they say there is a great lot of gold in it. There are now four different claims to it, making four mines, but if I touched it at all it seems it would be better to get the whole track and work it in one interest. I understand the whole property can be bought for about two hundred thousand dollars.

Fred. That's fifty thousand more than Bessie and I have.

Mr. C. Well, if you bought it, and it was all satisfactory, I would let you have fifty thousand dollars, provided that if you sold the stock, say fifty per cent. above par, you would give me a share of the advance above fifty.

Fred. Of the stock, sir?

Mr. C. Yes; if you owned the property you could form a mining company with a capital of say one million of dollars, divided into shares of one hundred dollars each; you could be president of the company, keep its direction in your own hands, make a market for the stock—enormous fortunes have been made that way; great mines and large quantities of gold obtained from them, and if some men have done it why shouldn't you?

Fred. I'm afraid, sir, you think too highly of me and my abilities.

Mr. C. Not a bit of it. I am willing to trust fifty thousand dollars of my money upon that head of yours, if it is young. Do you suppose I sent you to college to learn no more, and to know no more about mining than a man can find out in a red shirt with a pickaxe?

Fred. Well, sir, I can say I studied hard; I ought to know something about ores.

Mr. C. Now, if you will go out there and examine the property yourself, keep your own counsel (as I know you will), then, if after seeing it you want to buy it, and if you can get it for two hundred thousand dollars I will let you have fifty thousand to complete the purchase on the terms I have mentioned.

Bessie (putting her head in the door). Come, Fred, you are so long.

Fred. In a minute, dear.

Bessie. Oh ! come.

Mr. C. (going). You can think of what I said, because if you don't want to go I know who does.

Fred. I will, sir, and let you know.

BESSIE enters, going towards Mr. C.

Bessie. Go where, Guardy ?

Mr. C. Shall I tell her ?

Fred. Perhaps it would be well.

Mr. C. To buy a gold mine, dear.

Bessie (clapping her hands). Go, Fred—go—go—go—say yes, quick—quick. Then come with me ; I want to show you the dearest little puppy.

Mr. C. (aside). I wonder which is the biggest puppy, the little one outside or that big conceited one inside.

Fred. I will give you an answer, sir, in an hour.

Mr. C. I am going to the city. I'll come back here before I go ; you can tell me then. *[Exit Mr. C.]*

Fred. Bessie, come and sit down, I want to talk seriously to you.

Bessie. Don't talk seriously to me—I hate it ; our pastor does that every time he comes here. Please don't talk seriously to me, Fred.

Fred. But I must.

Bessie (pulling him towards c. d.). Come and see the puppy ; he is the cutest little puppy you ever saw.

Fred. Bessie, you must talk to me or I can't buy that place you want.

Bessie. Don't talk and look like that or you will make me cry.

Fred (putting his arm around her waist). My little wife knows I would not make her cry for anything in the world.

Bessie (looking in his face, half crying). Then don't be so cross.

Fred. I am not cross, dear, I am only serious.

Bessie. That's as bad as cross.

Fred. Won't you let me talk to you, darling.

Bessie. Come and see the puppy first.

Fred. Never mind the puppy. Sit down on the sofa for an instant and listen to me, darling.

Bessie (sits beside him). You won't be long?

Fred. Not very long.

Bessie (jumps up, runs quickly to table, rings, returns quickly and sits beside him). Now, dear, what is it?

Fred. I want to talk to you and get your serious opinion about a most important matter. (*Enter BOB, unseen by FRED. BESSIE stealthily beckons him to come closer to her; BOB coming closer; BESSIE still beckoning; BOB holding his ear down to her; BESSIE whispers to him; exit BOB; all this unperceived by FRED, who continues talking to BESSIE.*) Mr. Covert has made to me a business proposition. He knows of a most valuable mining property—in fact four gold mines, which he thinks can be bought for about two hundred thousand dollars. He says that if I will go and examine it myself he will be governed by my opinion as a civil engineer and metallurgist. And if I buy it he will advance me fifty thousand dollars so that I can buy the property if I approve after examination.

Bessie. Would you own the gold mine then?

Fred. Four of them.

Bessie (clapping her hands). Buy them. Buy them. Buy them.

Fred. But it will take all your money and mine.

Bessie. Take it. Take it. Take it and buy me one.

Fred. But, dear, it will take all our money.

Bessie. But, dear, we'll take all the gold out of the mine and buy the place I want, and the furniture, and you shall have "an income of a prince" (*patting his cheeks*), so you shall, you dear little prince, out of my gold mine.

Fred. But, Bessie darling—(*Enter BOB, followed by a RAGGED URCHIN, with puppy in his arms; BESSIE jumps up, runs to the BOY and snatches puppy from him, caressing it tenderly.*) (*Vexatiously*). Now what is a man to do with such a girl as that. Bessie, put down that puppy and come here. Bob, I'll break your neck. Bessie, come here.

Bessie. No, I won't now (*half crying. Exits petting the puppy, followed by BOY and BOB*).

Fred. I can't get angry with her, she has such confidence in my judgment. Well, she ought—when as cool-headed and clear-sighted a man as Mr. Covert is willing to risk fifty thousand dollars on it; I was too hasty with her; I made her cry; I ought to know better than to speak to a woman about business; their heads were not intended for serious matters; men were made to think and act for them; I am sorry I vexed her.

Enter BESSIE with the puppy in her arms.

Bessie. Are you cross yet?

Fred goes up to her, putting his arm around her waist, BESSIE leans her head on his shoulder.

Fred. I am not cross dear, but I have such weighty matters to consider.

Bessie. Isn't he a little darling? I bought him.

Fred. Oh! confound the pup.

Bessie. Don't talk that way to dear little Jumbo.

Fred. I am going to look at the gold mine.

Bessie (jumping with joy). Oh! oh! oh! I am so glad.

Fred. But I'll be gone a long time.

Bessie (half sadly). How long?

Fred. I don't know; gold mines are a long way from here—and the engineer requires time for careful examination.

Bessie. But you will hurry back to buy the place after you buy the gold mine.

Fred. You may be sure I will not stay longer from my Bessie than necessary. Shall I go, dear?

Bessie. Can't you get the gold mine any other way?

Fred. No, dear.

Bessie. Then go to-night and buy it.

Enter MR. COVERT and MRS. DESMOND.

Mrs. D. Go where? Buy what?

Bessie. To buy a gold mine.

Mr. C. To examine a mining property as a civil engineer and metallurgist.

Mrs. D. And what then?

Fred. And if I approve of the property—to buy it, madam.

Bessie. Yes, and I have given him all my money to buy a gold mine for me (*Petting Jumbo.*)

Enter BOB and KITTY.

All acting and speaking together.

<i>Stage positions.</i>	{	FRED. Center.
		BESSIE. R. of Fred.
		MRS. DESMOND. L. of Fred.
		MR. COVERT. A little in front of Fred's left.
		BOB. R. front.
		KITTY pulling Bob.

Fred (arm raised grandly). To buy a gold mine.

Bessie. To buy me a gold mine.

Mr. Covert. I will trust in his judgment.

Mrs. D. (in astonishment). A gold mine!

Bob. A gold mine! hurrah! hurrah!

Kitty. Hush you fool!

END ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I—*The same Parlor.*

Enter BOB in a terrible rage.

Bob (furiously). If I wasn't a Christian, I'd curse him; if I wasn't a servant, I'd bung his eyes; if I had my wages, I'd walk right out this minute; I'll pack my things and go right off, that I will (*stops*). No, I can't afford that until my month is up (*striking his breast*). Wait till I get my month's wages, then (*tragically*) I'll have my revenge.

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Hoity-toity—hoity-toity—what is the matter with you?

Bob. Away, false woman, away!

Kitty. Who are you talking to?

Bob (mocking her). "Somebody I won't tell is ten." I heard him, the old reprobate.

Kitty. Who?

Bob. The master and you. Don't deny it, woman. I heard you and him on the stairs, on the steps (*furiously*). Heard him say, "Kitty you are a pretty girl, a very pretty girl Kitty (*pulling his hair*).

Kitty. Can I help being pretty? Can I help master seeing I'm pretty because you don't?

Bob. I wish he was stone blind; wait till I get my wages for this month and I'll fix his eyes so he won't see, if I'm turned out of church for it.

Kitty. Turned out of church! turned in the jail yard for it or pay ten dollars.

Bob. Pay ten dollars! almost a month's wages for thrashing him? I can't afford that.

Kitty. No, nor I can't afford to lose you. (*Coquettishly, coaxingly.*) Now, Bob, how could I help it?

Bob. But he tried to kiss you.

Kitty. But I didn't let him (*patting his cheek*); but if somebody is good and nice (*Bob smiling*), and is a good little boy and don't make a fool of himself (*Bob grins*), there is no telling but I (*Bob smiling, KITTY runs away, gets to the door, turns, makes faces at him*) might if he wasn't such a donkey and didn't bray so loud. [*Exit KITTY.*

Bob. I a donkey—may be I am—she ought to know; she knows everything. If ever I get a chance at master I'll kick him so hard he'll think a donkey let him have it in his bread-basket with both feet; and if ever I get a chance at her—

KITTY puts her head in c.

Kitty. Bob, I was only teasing you (*Bob smiling*); that was all.

Bob. Was that all?

Kitty. Come and be friends.

Bob. Come in, Kitty.

Kitty. Will you be good?

Bob. Yes.

Kitty. Very good?

Bob. I'll do anything you tell me.

Kitty. Then don't make a fool of yourself (*laughs*).

[*Exit KITTY.*

Bob. Isn't that nice treatment for an injured man?

Enter MRS. DESMOND.

Mrs. D. It is two months since Fred went to "buy a gold mine," as Bessie says. I have not been idle in that time; I have been patient. You have been very close lately, Mr. Covert; the partnership is dissolved between you and me, Mr. Covert, the senior member having gone into business for himself. We will see if the junior member cannot do a little business for herself; very likely she can—time will tell, Mr. Covert. You are not quite *covert* enough for me, Mr. Covert, or I am very much mistaken.

BESSIE enters rapidly and very angry, with an open letter in her hand.

Bessie. Where is Guardy? I want to see him this very minute.

Mrs. D. What is the matter, dear; what has excited you so?

Bessie. To write me such a letter as that! to talk about my friends that way—the mischief-making slanderer! Where's Guardy; I must see him?

Mrs. D. Tell me what it is, dear.

Bessie. No, I can't; I can't, I can't; I want to see Guardy.

Mrs. D. (aside.) There must be something very serious in this; I never saw her show such temper as that.

Enter MR. COVERT.

Bessie (excitedly). Guardy, I want to see you this minute.

Mrs. D. Why, what is the matter?

Bessie. Come right straight to the library; I want to show you something.

Mrs. D. Don't move ; I am going to my own room. (*Aside.*) I will listen to this ; something must be the matter. [*Exit.*]

Bessie (*hands Mr. C. an open note. Sits tapping the floor with her foot nervously and excited*). Gaurdy, read that note of Lucille Lighthead ; I just now got it.

Mr. C. (*reads dcliberately*). Silly stuff—pshaw !—nonsense (*hands it back to her*) ; take no notice of it ; that amounts to nothing.

(*MRS. DESMOND looks in L. C. Stands listening unseen by them.*)

Bessie (*rises, very angry*). “Take no notice of it ; amounts to nothing?” when this girl writes me a note, telling me that I ought to know what your bank clerk, Simpkins told her——

Mr. C. Simpkins is a fool.

Bessie. Fool or no fool, he told her that you boasted of being a lover of Mrs. Desmond's, at a supper where there were twenty gentlemen ; and, as she says in her note, “where there was more champagne than good manners.” P. S., “Don't say anything to him about it, for he was drunk, so Simpkins says,” *Now here is the sting.* (*Reads.*) “But I thought it best to tell you, dear, what kind of a lady is visiting your ‘Gaurdy’—your immaculate ‘Gaurdy.’” (*Throws down the letter, stamps on it.*) You horrid thing !

Mr. C. Bessie, say nothing about it ; let it die out ; you will make it worse by noticing it.

Bessie. Am I to let that girl drive round the country with such a tale as this and injure you and Mrs. Desmond ?

Mr. C. Never mind me. When you are as old as I am, you'll know that such things never injure men ; those who hear it (if they believe it) may envy me, that's all ; and, of course, you know, that, as far as Mrs. Desmond is concerned, it is a lie.

Bessie. I don't want anyone to tell me it is a lie ; I know it is a lie, and, because it is a lie, I am not going to let that girl injure Mrs. Desmond. If I have to walk two miles to Lucille's house and then round the country to all our acquaintances, I will stop this wicked lie and let Lucille know what I think of her and that horrid Simpkins.

Mr. C. Let Mrs. Desmond's affairs alone ; let her attend to

her character herself ; you will injure yours by going to Miss Lighththead, and very much by going to others.

Bessie. Injure my character ?

Mr. C. Yes it would—a young girl, talking on such subjects round the country. It would do you such injury that it might be the cause of breaking off your marriage with Fred.

Bessie. If I thought that Fred would stand by and not horse-whip the man who would repeat such a lie as that of dear Mrs. Desmond, I would call him a coward, and, instead of loving him as I do now, I would hate him. (*Goes to table. Rings.*)

Enter Bob.

Bessie. Order the carriage ; tell them I want it quick.

[*Exit Bob.*

Mr. C. You are not going to Lucille's, surely ?

Bessie. Yes, I am ; and if I find that she has been visiting anywhere or speaking to anyone about what she writes here, I am going to follow her steps, and pull out each lying nail that she has drove in, if I have to spend from now to Christmas to do it.

Mr. C. You shall not go.

Bessie. I will go ! I am not a child now !

Mr. C. I cannot control you, but I can my own servants and horses—you shall not have the carriage.

Bessie. You can keep your carriage ; I will ride my little old pony. If he is old, he can carry me to Mrs. Dupre's, and I know she will lend me her carriage. There ! and I don't love you any more, and I never will again, and when Fred comes home I will walk right out of this house, and don't you ever speak to me again, sir. I am going to give Lucille a piece of my mind, and when Fred comes home I'll tell him what I think of you.

Mr. C. This is the gratitude I receive from the child I raised.

Bessie. If I had known what kind of a man you were, as I know now, you should never have raised me (as you call it). All you ever did for me you were paid for ; you neither "raised me" for love, or for nothing—you "raised me" for money—you were well paid for it ; I owe you nothing ; you never gave me anything more than you were paid for—house and food.

Mr. C. Bessie, you will be sorry for this. But if you will go take the carriage.

Enter BOB.

Bob. The carriage is waiting miss.

(*BESSIE feels in her pocket, gets out her purse—angrily takes a note ; throws it at him.*)

Bessie. There's ten dollars for the hire of your carriage for the day. (*Is going out furiously ; gets near the door.*) Bob ! put Jumbo in the carriage. [*Exit, followed by BOB.*]

Mr. C. (*picking up note Bessie threw down*). The devil's to pay, certain. Who would suppose she had such a temper ? What is Mrs. Desmond to her ? I don't remember saying it ; but I suppose I did—for I was drunk ; I recollect they were all boasting about women, so I suppose I boasted as big a lie as any of them ; I wish to heavens it was true. But to talk love to her—she wants marriage and five hundred thousand dollars, before she will listen. Oh ! confound the women, they are always playing the mischief. The only thing that saves me is that Bessie won't tell Mrs. Desmond, and if she did, what then ? Mrs. Desmond would leave the house—that would suit me exactly, because if she stays she might break up the sale of the gold mine, or I would have to pay her well to keep her still. It is only country gossip as long as she does not know it ; and after the gold mine is sold, I don't care whether she knows it or not. [*Exit Mr. C.*]

Enter MRS. DESMOND.

Mrs. D. (*looking after him.*) That thing lives ! I will make him recollect the woman he has slandered. Those who heard his foul mouth use my name shall witness part of my revenge. And you, my brave, true girl, now riding round to stay his vile utterances from being carried by envy and by gossip, shall be saved from his avarice if I have the power to save you.

Enter BOB.

Mrs. D. Bob, what is the matter between you and Kitty ?

Bob. I don't know, ma'am ; Kitty don't like me.

Mrs. D. Yes, she does ; and because I think her happiness is involved, I sent for you. I wish I had a house of my own, and if you and Kitty were married you both could live with me. I was thinking of keeping house, but you are so attached to Mr. Covert that I suppose you would not care to go with me.

Bob. If it wasn't for not seeing Kitty, I'd go when my month is up. I hate the sight of him, and if it wasn't that 'twould cost me ten dollars I'd beat the life out of him, and if ever I get a chance at him——

Mrs. D. Oh ! Nonsense.

Bob. It ain't no nonsense. I have my reasons, ma'am, and if I wasn't a Christian I'd curse him till he would stand up to his knees in the oaths I'd pile round him.

Mrs. D. What has he been doing to you ? Tell me ; I will be your friend. I want to see you and Kitty married, for I believe she is attached to you. What has come between you and her ?

Bob. If I tell you will you breathe it ?

Mrs. D. Of course not.

Bob. Master has been making love to her ; tried to kiss her ; I saw him—I'll, I'll, I'll one of those days——

Mrs. D. But Kitty couldn't help that, she has been very indignant because he treated her scandalously.

Bob. If I had my wages paid, I'd show him what it is to try to kiss her.

Mrs. D. How much will he owe you at the end of the month ?

Bob. Eighteen dollars, ma'am.

Mrs. D. If that was paid now could I hire you for twenty dollars ?

Bob. This minute, and glad to go.

Mrs. D. (*Takes out her purse.*) There is twenty dollars to pay you your wages, I give you the balance.

Bob. Hire me right now, right now, ma'am ?

Mrs. D. I would, but I would not like it known while I am in Mr. Covert's house.

Bob. May I die if any one shall know it !

Mrs. D. Not even Kitty ?

Bob. No—I'll be turned out of church before I'll tell it.

Mrs. D. Well, rather than lose you, I'd give you twenty-five dollars a month and a month's wages in advance.

Bob. Twenty-five dollars—and a month in advance ?

Mrs. D. If you obey me implicitly.

Bob. I'll stick to you closer—oh ! beg your pardon, ma'am, that's what Master Fred said.

Mrs. D. (Laughing.) Well, as Master Fred says—you will what ?

Bob. Stick by you, ma'am.

Mrs. D. (laughing.) Will you "stick by me," then ?

Bob. May I be turned out of church if I don't stick to you so close that a four-mule team could not pull me away.

Mrs. D. (handing him money). There—you are my servant from this minute.

Bob. I'm stuck by the month.

Mrs. D. Be silent. Now go.

Bob. Mute—be turned out of church first. [Exit.

Enter MR. COVERT, holding a map rolled up and a deed tied with red tape.

Mrs. D. Busy, as usual ; you look fresh as the racer the morning after he has beat the field.

Mr. C. And you look like a girl, but so much more beautiful.

Mrs. D. Oh ! how you can flatter—no wonder you succeed when your manners are as agreeable as your intellect is gigantic.

Mr. C. Who is flattering now, siren ?

Mrs. D. I have been speaking as truthfully about what pleases me as I am now about to speak of what is not agreeable.

Mr. C. If I can remove the unpleasantness you have only to mention it.

Mrs. D. I hope you will.

Mr. C. What is it ?

Mrs. D. Only that the association has not declared a dividend lately. The partnership was of your own seeking. I have been treated lately as if it was dissolved.

Mr. C. How can you talk thus ?

Mrs. D. Because it is true.

Mr. C. I have done nothing since you had the last fifty thousand. I think a lady ought not to complain who has made in cash over two hundred thousand dollars in about two months.

Mrs. D. I am not complaining. I only want to know if the association is ended or not?

Mr. C. Why of course it is not ; you are now, as then, the same to me, and I hope ever will be ; it is your own fault, charmer, if not closer.

Mrs. D. You said then : "From this time out we are one—one in object, one in plans, one in interest."

Mr. C. I did—and we are.

Mrs. D. How about the gold mine?

Mr. C. Oh ! that I have nothing to do with, except to loan Fred fifty thousand dollars to buy it (if he wishes, after examining it himself.) If you want to loan him the money, you are perfectly welcome. I do not make a cent by that operation. I loan fifty thousand dollars on his judgment as a civil engineer, and because I want to help him.

Mrs. D. And you get nothing for it?

Mr. C. Yes, if the stock goes over fifty above par, and you know it never will, so you see I only said that as an excuse to help the young fellow without his feeling under any obligations to me.

Mrs. D. And you do not make any money by the transaction?

Mr. C. Not a dollar, on my honor.

Mrs. D. On your honor?

Mr. C. On my faith and honor.

Mrs. D. Who is John L. Simpkins?

Mr. C. Who?

Mrs. D. John L. Simpkins is your dummy—one of your bank clerks—the charming young man who you always keep at your elbow, but never bring here ; who signs any papers you tell him, because all he has is his clerkship and that you can end in a moment ; in short, your puppet. This gold mine is in his name.

Mr. C. How do you know that?

Mrs. D. I have had the records searched. Would you like to see the copies?

Mr. C. What a woman?

Mrs. D. You are Simpkins. You sell the mine and get the money. Simpkins signs the papers. This is what you will make :

You sell the gold mine to Fred for \$190,000. He pays you \$140,000 cash, and gives you his note and a mortgage for \$50,000 due in ninety days. At the end of that time the mortgage will not be paid; Simpkins forecloses, sells the property, and buys it all back for \$25,000; account will then close thus: Fred will have paid you \$140,000 cash, and will owe you \$25,000, for which he will be your slave for the rest of his life—for owning a gold mine 90 days—while you will get \$140,000 and own the whole property, and have him owing you \$25,000 for letting him be the paper owner of a gold mine for ninety days. Beggary and ruin for Bessie and Fred—and a financial success for you.

Mr. C. Well, if it was, what then? You won't begrudge me making the money, will you?

Mrs. D. You never shall unless you pay me seventy thousand dollars—half—and cheap at that; one object—one plan, &c. Trying to deceive a poor women like me (*laughing*). Oh! you men—you men.

Mr. C. I suppose I must.

Mrs. D. You must.

Mr. C. I will give you the money after he pays me the \$140,000.

Mrs. D. No, sir; you deceived me once; you shall not do it twice. I want the money this very morning, or I will blow the whole gold mine, if I go with the explosion.

Mr. C. I haven't got the money.

Mrs. D. Borrow it.

Mr. C. I cannot unless you will wait until to-morrow.

Mrs. D. I give you one hour to give me that money, or up goes the mine.

Mr. C. I tell you I have not got it.

Mrs. D. You have property. What do you value this house and everything you have in it at?

Mr. C. Everything?

Mrs. D. Yes, everything.

Mr. C. Are you serious?

Mrs. D. Yes.

Mr. C. You shall have house, grounds, horses, carriages; everything, big and little; yes, and the clothes I wear.

Mrs. D. (*laughing*). Those on your back?

Mr. C. Yes (*laughing*), and those on my back, for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Mrs. D. And if I give it to you, will you tell me all about the gold mine?

Mr. C. Yes, everything, as clear as the sale.

Mrs. D. As minute as the sale?

Mr. C. Yes.

Mrs. D. It is a trade. I want the deeds in an hour. Your money is ready. Now mark me, do not leave out even a pin, or I blow the mine, as I am a woman.

Mr. C. Agreed. I'll go to a lawyer and have that deed made. I'll be back with it in an hour. (*Starts to go.*)

Mrs. D. Wait; tell me all about the gold mine before you go.

Mr. D. (*opens the map and parchment; points to a place on the map*). You see that point marked CASEY'S MOUND. I am going to sell him four mining claims *there*. This deed says, "commencing at a point known as "Casey's Mound." This deed gives him land and mines, commencing and ending at Casey's Mound. There never was a cent's worth of gold within two hundred miles of Casey's Mound.

Mrs. D. But he says he saw the gold mine himself, and surely he knows gold when he sees it.

Mr. C. Yes, he did see the mines; no wonder he said they were magnificent. They are worth this day four millions of dollars, and by expending a hundred thousand dollars or so in working them, so as to commence obtaining the gold, six millions of dollars could be obtained for them. When I have shown how rich a mine it is I can readily sell it for six millions of dollars. Now, this rich mine commences at this other point. (*Shows her a place on the map.*) That is called CASEY'S That is where I sent Fred. That is where the gold mines are; CASEY'S MOUND is where the rocks are. Now don't you see, leave the word *mound* out of this deed, and the gold mine is sold; put the word *mound* in, and instead of gold you are getting rocks (*laughs*).

Mrs. D. *joins in the laughter.*

Mrs. D. Splendid! So you are giving Fred and Bessie, by this deed, rocks instead of gold, and that little word *mound* is what makes the difference. What a brain—what a brain!

Mr. C. I am selling rocks pretty well, am I not ?

Mrs. D. Now go, and bring me the deed of this property—in an hour, mark.

Mr. C. (going). I will be back with it by then

Mrs. D. But no Casey's *Mound*, Mr. Covert (*both laugh*).

MR. COVERT *returns*.

Mr. C. I will tell you a secret. Fred will be here to-night on the nine o'clock train. Simpkins is to be here to deliver him the deed to the gold mine, and get his money for the rocks (*laughing*). We will close this transaction to-night. Bessie might break it up in the morning.

Mrs. D. Let Bessie give a reception to-night. Bring your friends from the city to welcome Fred home. Let the delivery of the deeds be made before the guests. This will keep Bessie busy and fill that idiotic Fred full of his own importance.

Mr. C. Excellent—excellent. Arrange for the reception with Bessie; that is a grand idea of yours; I will do my part, and have Simpkins so disguised that no one will know him. I'm going for your deeds now. [*Exit Mr. C.*]

Enter BESSIE.

Mrs. D. Come and kiss me. Where have you been all the morning ?

Bessie (kissing her). Only to air myself and Jumbo, and to call on Lucille.

Mrs. D. Is she to be one of the bridesmaids ?

Bessie. Indeed she's not. She and me had a quarrel ; but it's all right now.

Mrs. D. Have you been anywhere else ?

Bessie. No, I found it was not necessary; I did what I went for and came back.

Mrs. D. Young ladies going to be married have always their little mysteries, so my dear I won't talk of that ; but I am very glad you have come back early, because I have good news for you.

Bessie. What is it ? What is it ? Tell me. Tell me.

Mrs. D. Fred will be home to-night.

Bessie. Oh ! I am so glad. Let's drive to the depot and meet him.

Mrs. D. The train does not arrive until nine to-night, dear.

Bessie. Oh ! why don't it come now ? Let me see what o'clock it is.

Mrs. D. Sit down, dear.

Bessie. How can I ? I want nine o'clock to come.

Mrs. D. I want you to give a reception to-night to welcome Fred. Take the carriage and drive round ; ask your friends to be sure to come, that you want to give Fred a surprise.

Bessie. Oh ! won't that be delightful. I'll go this minute. Won't we surprise Fred. What shall I wear ? I believe I'll wear that dress that Fred likes so much.

Mrs. D. Be sure to ask Lucille Lighthouse.

Bessie. I don't want her.

Mrs. D. Please ask her, dear, to oblige me.

Bessie. Well, I suppose I must. (*Rings.*)

Enter BOB.

Bessie. Tell them not to put up the carriage I want it at once ; (*Exit BOB.*) (*Kisses Mrs. Desmond.*) You're the sweetest darling. Give all the orders. Won't we have fun ? (*Kisses her again.*) I will drive round and see everybody, and hurry back.

[*Exit BESSIE, rapidly.*]

Mrs. D. rings. Enter BOB.

Bob. Ma'am ?

Mrs. D. Do you see that inkstand ?

Bob. The one on the table, ma'am ?

Mrs. D. Yes ! If you see that inkstand on a paper as a weight, and I tell you to look for Miss Bessie's visiting book, you will spill the ink on the paper.

Bob. Capsize the inkstand on the paper, ma'am ? Spoil the cloth ?

Mrs. D. Will you do what I order ?

Bob. Yes, ma'am, if I am turned out of church for it. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. D. Then see you do it. Go!

Bob (aside). What an eye! (*going*) May I be turned out of church if —
[*Exit BOB.*]

Enter MR. COVERT, holding two deeds.

Mr. C. You see I am here inside the hour. Here is the deed, give me the money, and this house and grounds, with everything in it, clothes and all, is yours.

Mrs. D. Let me see that paper.

Mr. C. (hands it to her). It's all right; there is no Casey's *Mound* in that.

Mrs. D. (reading it to herself). I see it is all right; will you take my check?

Mr. C. Certainly. (*Takes out a check-book, hands it to her.*) You have an account with that bank, I believe.

Mrs. D. Yes, I have enough there to pay this. (*Filling up the check, signs it, tears it out. Hands him the check-book, holding the check.*) I am to give you one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the property. You owe me seventy thousand as my share of the sale of the gold mine. Here is my check for eighty thousand dollars. Give me the deed.

Mr. C. There's the deed; the property is yours.

Mrs. D. (receives the deed and hands him the check.) That closes this transaction.

Mr. C. (laughing). Are you going to turn me out now?

Mrs. D. (laughing). Not at present; you're too charming a visitor. (*Puts the deed in her bosom. Rings.*) Let me see the deed to the gold mine; I never saw one. (*Mr. C. opens it, spreads it out on the table; Mrs. D. puts the inkstand on it to hold it down while examining it.*)

Enter BOB. Still looking at the paper. (To BOB.) Look for Miss Bessie's visiting book.

(*BOB goes to the table, seems to be searching for the book; spills the ink over the deed.*)

Mrs. D. Oh!

Mr. C. You infernal scoundrel; see what you have done! Get out of here, curse you.

Bob (going ; aside). May I be turned out of church if I ever get a chance at you. [Exit BOB.]

Mr. C. (furious). There's the sale of the gold mine lost. What is to be done now?

Mrs. D. Have a new one written.

Mr. C. That paper could not be re-written in a day. Bessie is angry with me ; I tell you if she gets ten minutes alone with Fred there will be such a fuss between me and them that this sale will never take place. That is why this deed has to be delivered to-night, and now that infernal scoundrel has ruined it all. (*Going up and down the stage distracted.*)

Mrs. D. It shall take place. Go to the city, have Simpkins here ready to sign it. Bring all your friends. I will have fifty printers (*takes the blotted deed from the table*) putting this in type, and have a printed deed here in time for the grand ceremonies at the reception. The sale shall be completed to-night if it costs me ten thousand dollars. Go do your part, I will do mine.

Enter BOB.

Bob. Master Fred has come.

Mrs. D. What ! come ?

Mr. C. (aside). Why didn't the fool stay till night as I told him ?

Enter BESSIE, followed by KITTY.

Bessie. Where's Fred ? Where's Fred ?

Enter FRED.

Fred (runs to BESSIE ; embraces her). Here, darling.

Mrs. Desmond. }

Mr. Covert. }

Kitty. }

Welcome ! Welcome home !

Bob. Hurrah ! Hurrah ! Hurrah !

QUICK CURTAIN.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I—*The Drawing Room**. MRS. DESMOND *discovered, sitting at a table.*

Mrs. D. Fred's arrival and the party have made Bessie so happy, it is not likely that she will tell Fred to-night what took place between her and Mr. Covert. I must have one-third interest in that gold mine (*rings. Enter BOB*). Where is Kitty?

Bob. Helping Bessie, ma'am.

Mrs. D. Where is Master Fred?

Bob. Dressing, ma'am.

Mrs. D. Arrange it so that he will come here without saying I sent for him, and do it at once.

Bob. Yes, ma'am. (*aside*). That's easy; I'll tell him Miss Bessie is dressed and down here, looking round, and nobody with her—may I be turned out of church if that don't bring him.

Mrs. D. What are you waiting for? Go, do what I ordered.

Bob. (*going; aside*) What an eye—may I be turned out of church, but— [Exit BOB.]

Mrs. D. I wish I had charge of that young man Fred, instead of making money for him (as I am compelled to do to save Bessie), I'd put him to work to earn his own living, sawing logs. He never would make a mechanic, and that's the man that a woman is to love, honor and obey. He is not fit to have charge of a goat, much less of a woman, and there are thousands like him in this very city. He was a fool before he went to college; all that college did for him was to give him a diploma in latin, with a big red seal, and to turn him out on the world a stuffed idiot, when if he had been put to work on a farm he might have been some little use in raising potatoes, while my little Bessie is what she is for want of proper education, but time will eradicate the lightness of her training, and if she gets out of his hands, she will make a noble woman. But he is a nuisance.

Enter FRED.

Fred. I beg you pardon, I thought Bessie was here.

Mrs. D. You had better sit down, you will see her here sooner than anywhere else. You are a wonderful man, a wonderful worker to accomplish all you have, and return so soon.

Fred. Well, you see, "knowledge is power." I know what to do, so I did it. Now the difficulty with most men is that they do not know what to do; that is why so few men accomplish much, and why women accomplish nothing of any importance; but they are not to blame for that; nature created them in her own laboratory, beautiful, but weak, charming; but unfitted for knowledge.

Mrs. D. How true that is; I always wanted to be a man; it must be the zenith of enjoyment to feel one's own powerful machinery working within, turning out great thoughts. How could you do all you had to do so speedily?

Fred. I knew what to do; I am a man.

Mrs. D. Nature's great man can make even a weak girl a loving, trusting, obedient and noble woman; I have such faith in your power that I have no doubt but you by your manhood's vigorous brain and talents will make Bessie the model wife of the country.

Fred. I shall endeavor to improve her.

Mrs. D. How can she help to improve, when she will have such a husband?

Fred. You are very complimentary.

Mrs. D. Have I not the right to say so, when I see what you have accomplished in two months—examined a gold mine, returned home, and now about to become its owner. Tell me, what is your opinion of the property?

Fred. Madam, that mining property that I am going to buy, I am clearly of the opinion will produce more gold to the ton than any mine in the West.

Mrs. D. And this is your professional opinion?

Fred. Undoubtedly so, madam, and in the language of my assistant engineer, Mr. Sylvester, it is a magnificent property.

Mrs. D. Will you let me have one-third interest with you and Bessie? I will give you the money now; I do not like the idea of your borrowing from a mere banker; he will afterwards take all the credit to himself that belongs to you.

Fred. By jove! he never shall, madam.

Mrs. D. You great geniuses are too apt to overlook the power of money; but you ought not to be under obligations to any one; pray let me give you this certified check for one-third of the purchase money; pay all and have no borrowing, and honor me by being connected in the purchase with such a distinguished gentleman.

Fred. (taking the check). It shall be as you desire, madam; you can trust to my attending to your interest.

Mrs. D. Many thanks; I feel better satisfied now; you can't think what a comfort it is for a woman to feel she can rely upon a great man.

Fred. You can always rely on me, madam; I will have your name inserted in the deed with mine and Bessie's.

Mrs. D. Bessie will be so unhappy without you; you had best stay and comfort her; I am going to the city; give me a line to the seller, directing him to insert my name in the deed, and informing him I have bought and paid for one-third of the property.

Fred. With pleasure. (*Writes note; closes it in an envelope; addresses it; handing it to her.*) You have got a great property, madam; which, while I live, I will see shall be successfully managed.

Mrs. D. Oh! I would not have touched it if it had not been for you. [Exit Mrs. D.]

Enter BESSIE. FRED goes to embrace her.

Bessie (pulling back). Don't touch me, you'll rumple my dress.

Fred. So your dress is more precious to you than me.

Bessie. Now don't be cross.

Fred. And you call that love?

Bessie. Call what love? My dress?

Fred. Miss Granger, when a lady becomes engaged, her every thought should be concentrated on the man who is to be her husband.

Bessie. And isn't mine?

Fred. It does not seem to me that you have any thoughts this evening, except those you bestow on your dress.

Bessie. Don't you want me to look nice?

Fred. Of course I do, Miss Granger, and I desire that you always pay a great deal of attention to your toilet; but you seem to forget, that you are dressing to please me, and not to please others.

Bessie. I don't like you to speak to me that way; it isn't kind.

Fred. It is necessary; I do not wish you to look on it as unkindness, but as the result of your own deportment to me.

Bessie. And because I wouldn't let you kiss me, and muss my dress, you treat me as if I had no right to move, or act, except as you please; you shan't kiss me this whole evening, now.

Fred. Miss Granger, you forget what is due to me.

Bessie. And you shan't dance with me either.

Fred. You will do as I direct you.

Bessie (angry). As you direct me, indeed!

Fred. When you became engaged to me, you became my property.

Bessie (very angry). Then I am not engaged to you, and I am no longer your property.

Enter Bob. Stands at door.

Bob. Mr. Sylvester.

Enter MR. SYLVESTER; walks toward FRED.

Fred (they shake hands). Permit me to present you—Mr. Sylvester, my assistant engineer—Miss Granger. *(They both bow.)*

Mr. Sylv. I am afraid Miss Granger will deem me a country youth, coming at such an unfashionable hour.

Bessie. I am so pleased to see you, Mr. Sylvester, that I wish you had come much earlier.

Fred. (Jealously; aside.) She is more polite to him than to me.

Mr. Sylv. You are very kind, but the truth is, Miss Granger, that my life has not been spent in halls of fashion—if it had been I would have had at least an easier time—miners and mines, woodsmen and woods, prairies and frontiersmen have been my companions and my homes. If, then, I sin against fashionable etiquette, Miss Granger, I hope will overlook it, I promising to try and not do so again.

Bessie. Mr. Sylvester I think will rather have to pardon me,

for I am continually breaking the rules that fashion has prescribed.

Fred. (aside.) Listen to that ! Oh ! these women, these women !

Mr. Sylv. If I was Fashion, I would change my rules to please Miss Granger ; I should be her subject.

Fred. (aside.) The impudent——

Bessie (laughing.) I would be very capricious, I'm afraid.

Mr. Sylv. (to Fred.) Who wouldn't be the subject of such a queen ?

Fred. Queens—nonsense !

Mr. Sylv. Look at England's queen ; she rules and her subjects are made happy by her rule.

Bessie. Our city gentlemen would be improved by learning in your school, Mr. Sylvester.

Mr. Sylv. I learned it in a rough school, Miss Granger—but one thing there I did learn—and that was to honor women.

Bessie (to FRED.) What a pity you did not graduate there.

Fred. What a pity I don't make a fool of myself.

Bessie. Indeed it is (to Mr. SYLVESTER.) Let me show you the conservatory.

Mr. Sylv. I shall be delighted.

Bessie. Will you devote part of the evening to me, and tell me all about the gold mines—and the West.

Mr. Sylv. Not only this evening, but all my life, if you'll permit me.

Bessie (laughing.) Then I will take possession of my property.

[Takes his arm. Exit BESSIE and SYLV.]

Fred (looking after them.) “Take possession of her property.” Did she mean what she said just now to me ? Not she ; That is always the way of women—she thinks she will make me jealous—discard me for him—ridiculous—I will let her see that she cannot trifle with me—I will leave her to her Mr. Sylvester ; not one particle of attention will I show her this night. She will be begging my pardon in the morning.

Enter MRS. DESMOND.

Mrs. D. Where is Bessie ?

Fred. I got my assistant engineer, Mr. Sylvester, to wait on her this evening, as I have more important things to attend to. I have consented to Mr. Covert's request that I should receive the deeds to the gold mine at the reception. He has invited John L. Simpkins, I understand, to come to-night and deliver them before all the company, with suitable ceremonies, etc.

Mrs. D. That will be pleasant indeed. It will be as original and grand as you are in all things. Is it not time we should go and receive our guests?

Fred. I think so--allow me. (*Presents his arm.*)

Mrs. D. Who will attend to Bessie?

Fred. I told Sylvester to attend to her.

Fred. You are going to receive, of course?

Mrs. D. I am going to assist Bessie.

Enter BESSIE, leaning on MR. SYLVESTER'S arm.

Bessie. Mr. Sylvester, let me introduce you to my dearest friend, Mrs. Desmond.

Mr. Sylv. I envy you that title, Mrs. Desmond.

Mrs. D. My Bessie is warm-hearted, Mr. Sylvester—

Bessie. Oh, never mind me, here come our guests.

Enter LADIES and GENTLEMEN (guests) L. C.

Bessie (to SYLVESTER). Now stay by my side (*coquettishly*). Recollect, you are my property all this evening.

(GUESTS are received by BESSIE and MRS. DESMOND. GUESTS then congratulate FRED on his return.)

Enter MR. COVERT and SIMPKINS, disguised as an elderly gentleman.)

Mr. C. (brings SIMPKINS to FRED). You gentlemen have never met, I believe. Your agents have been doing the negotiations, I understand. Mr. Clancey, this is John L. Simpkins. He will soon have your money and you his gold mine.

Fred. Glad to see you, sir, but you must excuse me now, I am going to dance. (*FRED goes to secure a partner.*)

Simpkins. Cool, that.

Bessie (to MR. SYLVESTER). Now let me get you a partner, and after the waltz come back to me.

Sylv. Let me stay with you, please.

Bessie (archly). You must do as I bid, then you can come back. (*Leads him to a partner and returns to MRS. DESMOND.* *Music—dancing—waltz.*) (*To MRS. DESMOND.*) Ain't he lovely? He is so handsome, and such a perfect gentleman.

Mrs. D. What would Fred think if he heard you?

Bessie. I don't know—I don't care—and I like Mr. Sylvester a great deal better than him.

Mrs. D. Hush, dear!

(*MR. COVERT and SIMPKINS approach them.*)

Mr. C. Let me introduce to you, ladies, Mr. John L. Simpkins. I will leave him in your charge for a few minutes.

[*Exit Mr. C.*]

Mrs. D. Take a seat with us, Mr. Simpkins. (*SIMPKINS sits between them. Music stops—waltz ends. GUESTS promenade.*)

Simpkins. I see that engineer, Fred sent to examine the gold mine is here.

Mrs. D. You mean Mr. Sylvester?

Simpkins. Yes; he's the man that did the work. He went to Casey's in California—and a rough time he's had of it for two months—though he looks fresher than Fred does, who has been going it in the city all the time.

Bessie. So Fred has been in the city the past two months?

Simpkins. Yes, and a gay time he has had of it. Women and wine, etc., etc.; but young men will be young men.

Bessie. Did Mr. Covert know this?

Simpkins. Why, of course; Covert is a gay bird himself.

COVERT approaches them.

Covert (to SIMPKINS). Come and take a glass of wine.

(*All exit for supper except BESSIE and MRS. DESMOND.*)

Mrs. D. Darling, do not judge too hastily ; perhaps Fred can explain all this.

Bessie. Explain it ! the liar, profligate and libertine !

Mrs. D. Hush, dear, hush !

Bessie. I will not. If he ever dares to speak to me again I will wither him with my contempt. Let me go to my room for a moment. [*Exit* BESSIE.]

Enter MR. COVERT.

Mr. C. Has the printer come with the deed ?

Mrs. D. I expect him every minute.

Mr. C. When it comes have everything arranged for signing it. Then send Bob for me, and I will bring Simpkins and the notary in.

Mrs. D. Keep them all at the supper-table until I send you word. [*Exit* MR. COVERT.]

Enter BESSIE and BOB.

Bob. The printer brought this, ma'am. (*Hands her a rolled paper, the deed.*)

(*MRS. DESMOND takes deed from BOB, examining it carefully.*)

Mrs. D. It is all right. Bob, put that table here (*points L.*). BOB obeys.

Mrs. D. Tell Mr. Covert everything is ready ; that I am waiting for him. [*Exit* BOB.]

Enter, c., MR. COVERT *between* FRED and SIMPKINS, *followed by* NOTARY and CLERKS. (*These come to the table where MRS. DESMOND is standing.*) MR. SYLVESTER *enters and sits by* BESSIE. GUESTS *enter, followed by* BOB.

Mr. C. Ladies and gentlemen, we are about to witness the transfer, in this room, of a gold mine. (*Pointing to SIMPKINS.*) This gentlemen is the seller. (*Pointing to FRED.*) And this is the buyer for himself and——

Mrs. D. His associates.

(*Putting the deed before SIMPKINS, who signs the paper. The NOTARY and CLERKS sign it. NOTARY puts red seal to his acknowledgment ; then hands the paper to SIMPKINS.*)

Fred. Here is the money. Give me the deed. (*Hands SIMPKINS three checks.*) Are they right?

Simpkins (*looking at checks ; putting them in his pocket*). They are all right. (*Hands FRED the paper.*) And here is your deed for the gold mine. You have got it cheap.

Mr. C. (*shaking hands with FRED*). Let me congratulate you.

(*GUESTS congratulate FRED. SIMPKINS stealthily gives the checks to COVERT.*)

Covert (*aside*). That's O. K. A good price for rocks.

Mrs. D. (*to FRED*). I'll hold the deed ; make them a speech. (*He gives her the deed.*)

Fred. My friends, I thank you much.

Guests. Tell us where the gold mine is?

Mr. Simpkins. In California, at Casey's Mound.

Sylv. (*approaches excited to SIMPKINS*). Where did you say the gold mine you have just sold is?

Simpkins. At Casey's Mound.

Sylv. It is an infamous swindle ! Give back that money, you infernal scoundrel.

Mr. C. (*to SYLVESTER*). Leave my house, sir ; you shall not insult my guests. Mr. Clancey is able to take care of his interests without your interference.

Fred. I should think so ; I know what I'm doing. Who, asked you, sir, for your opinion ?

Mr. Sylv. You may do what you like with your own, but I'll not stand by and let that young lady (*pointing to BESSIE*) be swindled.

Mr. C. } (*together.*) Leave the house.
Fred. }

Mr. Sylv. No, not 'till I see justice done. (*Approaches SIMPKINS.*) Give Miss Granger her money back, or——

Mrs. D. Hold ; that's the wrong man. (*Snatches the wig off of SIMPKINS' head.*) This is only the tool. (*Points to COVERT.*) That is the master. (*Holding up the deed.*) There is no such word as *mound* in this deed. I own one-third of this property, and I took good care that the swindle (*pointing at COVERT*) he

intended should fail. (*COVERT attempts to snatch the deed from her.*)

Mrs. D. Stand back, thou fraud.

Fred. Give me the deed.

Mrs. D. I will not.

Fred. You shall.

Bessie. She shall not. (*Goes alongside of Mrs. DESMOND.*)
I will not trust you, and here, before all my friends, I discard you forever.

(*FRED and Mr. COVERT both attempt to snatch the deed. SYLVES-TER rushes between them.*)

Guests. Oh!

Mr. C. Leave my house, sir.

Mrs. D. This is my house, and everything in it is mine. (*Points to COVERT.*) I bought and paid for even the clothes on that man's back. You are my guests, and not his. Through his means I lost my husband and most of my fortune. He invited me here to spend the summer, thinking he could rob me of what I had left, and not only me, but this dear girl, and he has dared to slander me in his drunken revels. Bob (*points to COVERT*), knock that slanderer down, and kick him out of my house.

Bob (rushing at COVERT). May I be turned out of church if I don't. (*Knocks COVERT down.*)

KITTY enters.

Kitty and Guests. Oh! Oh!

(*Fred rushing to COVERT's assistance.*)

Sylv. (*raises a chair over FRED's head.*) Don't you interfere, or by the heavens above me, I'll brain you where you stand.

QUICK CURTAIN.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Casey's in California.—Rocky Scenery.—Mining Hut.*

CRAZY GEORGE *in miner's dress discovered drilling a hole for a blast in the rocks at C.*

CRAZY G. *takes a large locket set with diamonds from his breast (the locket is hung round his neck by a buck-skin string). Looking round to see if any person sees him, comes down center, opens it, gets on his knees before it, kisses it, talks to it.*

Crazy G. I am not crazy—am I? I took all your money, didn't I? I bought a gold mine for you, didn't I? I haven't the gold yet, though—but I will bring it soon. They told me I might bore here. If I only had a charge! (*puts his hands to his head.*) My poor head—it aches. Never mind, my queen, I'll bring you back your money. (*Kisses miniature, puts it back in his breast.*) If I only had a charge!

Enter MR. SYLVESTER.

Mr. Sylv. Won't you go to the camp with me, George?

Crazy G. If I only had a charge!

Mr. Sylv. Been drilling for a blast again, George?

Crazy G. (*Whispers to him.*) Most finished. If I only had a charge! I ain't crazy, am I? If I only had a charge!

Mr. Sylv. My poor fellow, you are not the only one a gold mine has made crazy.

Crazy G. The queen is waiting. (*Whispers.*) I spent her money. If I only had a charge! (*Goes back to drilling.*)

Enter BESSIE.

Mr. Sylv. (*taking off his hat.*) Good morning, Miss Bessie. As usual you are up earlier than many of the hands.

Bessie. We have so much to do—washing, sewing, cooking for travelers, trying to earn money enough to support us, so as to

put all the money we brought with us into developing the mine, that I have to rise early and to work late.

Mr. Sylv. I little thought I would ever see you or Mrs. Desmond toiling like this.

Bessie. How could we avoid it? Do you suppose that I could have lived associated with Mr. Clancey? I would have gone as servant first. I hate the very name of that man.

Mr. Sylv. And if I had the money I would work as a servant if it took my last dollar to keep you from toils like this:

Bessie. You have done for me more than money could.

Mr. Sylv. I have done nothing more than my duty.

Bessie. You have watched over, cheered and counseled Mrs. Desmond and me with a care as gentle as a woman and as brave as a lion. These scenes and trials have taught me more than I could tell you, or you would wish to hear; and now that all our money is gone, and no gold has come from where it went, and I have naught but a life of labor for self-support to look forward to, my only regret is that I can only prove my gratitude to Mrs. Desmond and you by words instead of acts.

Mr. Sylv. Oh! speak not thus. Think what my feelings must be in seeing day by day that mine, like a hungry monster, consuming all your store, while you toiled, trusting in me, that it would some day yield up that gold hidden within its dark recesses. While I, in whom you trusted, failed to make the monster give it up, and fed it with your toil. I have planned, devised and worked to reach its golden heart and lay it at your feet. I never felt the bitterness of poverty until now, when I want gold for you. I have not gold to give you; but I have a man's strength to labor for you. Let me but do it and that labor will be light to me. When you were rich I would not have dared to sue for that hand which is worth more to me than any gold mine.

Bessie. (*Gives him her hand.*) It is empty now; but it shall be yours if ever it is full.

Mr. Sylv. Give it to me now, empty as it is, and I will prize it more than coffers filled with gems.

Bessie. I would not add to your burdens, nor would I wish to feel dependent; but if the time should ever come when I shall have that gold that now I lack, come then, and take the hand that

rests in yours ; but, until then, be still, as ever you have been, my truest friend.

Enter MRS. DESMOND.

Mrs. D. Mr. Sylvester, it grieves me to say that the works must stop. I find we have only money enough left to pay the wages of the men. I wish you to thank them for us and pay them off.

Mr. Sylv. Cannot we keep the works going a little longer ? We are doing all that we can do to reach the paying ore.

Mrs. D. Of that I am sure, but we have been disappointed in not reaching it before, it required more money to buy Fred Clancey out than we first thought, hence our lack of means. It is with pain I say it: the works must stop.

Mr. Sylv. That means ruin.

Mrs. D. I know it.

Bessie. Do not despond ; we have health, we have done what is right, and though we may never reach the gold, I am thankful that we bought it, though it should for the future, as it has in the past, consume not only our fortune but what we have made by toil.

Mrs. D. And why, my dear ?

Bessie. Because it has shown me the baseness of some (*putting her one arm around Mrs. DESMOND'S neck and giving one hand to SYLVESTER*)—the goodness of others.

Mrs. D. But it has been at such a cost to you, my dear, that it forms my greatest grief to think what you have suffered.

Bessie. Then think not thus, for gladly would I give all this mine has cost me in gold, privation and in toil—aye ! and thrice ten thousand score to have been saved from wedding Clancey.

Mrs. D. My brave, true-hearted girl.

Mr. Sylv. Surely the God beneath whose skies you stand is smiling on you.

Mrs. D. (to BESSIE). Let us go and seek His counsel—He will aid us.

[*Exit MRS. DESMOND and BESSIE.*

Mr. Sylv. (looking up to heaven). Rend thou these rocks for

them. Give them that gold you here have hid, for none deserve it better.

Enter MINERS.

Crazy G. (going round among the miners). If I only had a charge!

Mr. Sylv. (to FOREMAN). Have we any blasting charges left?

Foreman. Only one.

Mr. Sylv. Give it to that poor fellow; it can do us no good.

Foreman. What's the use of wasting powder on him. He has been blasting round the country for the last five years. There's not a camp that hasn't given Crazy George powder.

Miners. That's all he ever asks for.

Foreman. Better take him with us and make him eat instead of blasting round the camp.

Mr. Sylv. He won't go away from that hole till he has made the blast. Let him have that charge, Foreman.

[Exit FOREMAN.]

Mr. Sylv. Men, stay here till I return. I am going to tell Mrs. Desmond that you have come from the mine. *[Exit SYLV.]*

Enter KITTY, carrying a bucket and a big pot, followed by BOB carrying very large wash tub full of MINERS' clothes and a bundle of wood under his arm.

Kitty (to BOB). Put them things down. (BOB obeys.) Now go and get me the stool to put the tub on. (BOB going.) Bring me the soap, too.

Bob. You're always forgetting something. May I be turned out of church if—

Kitty. If you don't go right straight and hurry back I'll send you back to New York and you shan't wait upon me.

[Exit BOB.]

Miners. Oh! don't treat the poor fellow so.

Kitty. Who asked you to pity him? He's better treated now than he deserves. I've got a big washing to do for you all and no one to help me except Miss Bessie.

Miners. Miss Bessie shan't ; we'll help you ourselves.

Kitty. Now, that's right ; some of you go and get all the tubs back of the house ; some of you go and get the water ; one of you get all the soap that's under the shed ; bring all the clothes that you'll find in the corner. [*Exit MINERS rapidly.*]

Kitty (with her hands on her hips). How I like to make the men obey me. A woman is worth something in the mines. I think I'll take that big-whiskered foreman and rule him all my life, just to please myself and spite Bob.

Enter MINERS. Running in with the tubs, etc., KITTY sent for.

Miners. Here we are, Miss Kitty.

Kitty. Put them down. Now go to work.

(*MINERS obey. All the men on their knees before the tubs washing.*

KITTY walking up and down directing them with a queenly air.)

Enter BOB.

Bob. May I be turned out of church——!

Enter MR. SYLVESTER.

Kitty. Oh !

[*Exit KITTY.*]

(*MINERS all rise, looking abashed.*)

Miners. Only helping Kitty, sir.

Mr. Sylv. (to *FOREMAN, who enters*). Were you helping Kitty, too ?

Foreman. I have been trying to get her to let me help her all my life ; but that cursed Bob is in my way, I fear.

Mr. Sylv. She thinks more of your black whiskers than she does of that fellow's whole body.

Foreman. I'm blessed, then, if I don't ask her, after I give this charge to Crazy George. (*Goes to CRAZY G., hands him the charge, and is going out L. Stops as MR. SYLVESTER commences speaking.*)

Mr. Sylv. (to *MINERS*). Men, I am instructed by Mrs. Desmond and Miss Bessie to thank you all for the faithful manner in which you have worked since they came to the mines, and to pay you your wages.

Miners. Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

Mr. Sylv. (*raising his hand for silence*). But they are grieved to tell you the works must stop.

Miners. No, no, no !

Foreman. Men, let me have my say. If we haven't struck the vein yet, it ain't no fault of Mr. Sylvester, nor of us ; one month's more work and we'll strike it. That's me—and I say, wages or no wages let us keep on.

Miners. Yes ; yes ; keep on ! Hurrah for Mrs. Desmond ! Hurrah for Miss Bessie ! (*Cheering.*)

Foreman. One more for our superintendent.

Miners. Hurrah for Mr. Sylvester ! (*Cheering.*)

Mr. Sylv. Thank you, men, for them and myself ; but the works cannot go on. The mine has swallowed all their money. When your wages are paid all that will be left to them is the mine.

Foreman. We're not the men to leave them in the lurch ; are we, mates ?

Miners. Not we ; we don't want our wages ; keep the money for grub ; we'll strike the vein yet.

Foreman. We are going on with our work. Keep the money to buy grub to feed us ; we'll strike the vein before it all gives out ; won't we mates ?

Miners. That's the talk.

Enter MRS. DESMOND and BESSIE. MINERS cheer them as they enter.

Miners. Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

Mrs. D. } Thanks to you all ; thanks.
Bessie. }

Mr. Sylv. The men say they will not take their wages now. To buy provisions with it for them. They believe they will strike the vein before long. They want to go on with the work.

Mrs. D. Men, this would not be just.

Bessie. You are all so good ; but how could we pay you if you did not reach the vein ?

Foreman. Mistress, you and Miss Bessie there have been kind and good to us. We have seen you working as hard as any of us, so as to make your money go as far as possible. You are a

pair of honest, plucky women, and we ain't the men to desert you now.

Miners. That's the talk ; not we.

Bessie. *Very much affected.*

Sylv. (to Bessie.) Do not take it to heart so, Miss Bessie. We will strike the vein yet.

Bessie. It is the kindness of you all that affects me.

Mrs. D. My good men I fear we could never pay you.

Foreman. (Pointing to SYLVESTER.) That's as good an engineer and as smart a superintendent as I have ever worked under, ain't he mates ?

Miners. He's one of the right sort.

Foreman. If Mr. Sylvester will go on leading us, we'll stick to the mine till we strike the gold, or the grub gives out.

Miners. Talking sense now.

Mr. Sylv. (To MRS. DESMOND and BESSIE.) Let the men have their way.

Mrs. D. Very well.

Mr. Sylv. That's all right, boys, we will go on with the work. I'll buy provisions with the money and make them last as long as possible.

Miners. That's the man.

Mr. Sylv. Then all hands to work.

[*Exit MINERS.*

[*Cheering. Led by SYLVESTER.*

Crazy G. has finished the blast and put a match to it. Turns around; sees MRS. DESMOND. Tremblingly approaches her. Stops gazing at her greatly agitated. Moves—stops—puts his hands to his head ; tries to speak ; staggers towards her ; screams ; faints—falls—MRS. DESMOND and BESSIE rush to him.

Mrs. D. Bessie, get some water ! Quick ! Quick !

[*Exit BESSIE.*

Mrs. D. (bending over him.) Poor man.

Crazy G., recovering, rising partially ; feels his head ; looking intensely at her.

Mrs. D. Do you feel better now ?

Crazy G. Hush, did you hear?

Mrs. D. Yes, yes, be still for a little, you will be better soon.

Crazy G. She's talking. Hush! Tell her I'll bring all her money back.

Mrs. D. Yes, yes.

Crazy G. She's a queen. Look, (*takes out the locket, opens it, kisses it.*) Look. (*Presenting miniature.*) She's a queen.

Mrs. D. My husband! George! George! Help! Help!

Enter BESSIE, SYLVESTER, FOREMAN, MINERS, KITTY, followed by BOB with some sticks, a pot and fire. KITTY motions BOB go and build the fire for her washing. BOB is making the fire where CRAZY GEORGE was drilling.

Crazy G. (rising.) Who spoke?

Mrs. D. My husband, speak to me! Speak to me!

Crazy G. Queen.

Mrs. D. (throwing her arms around him.) Speak again! Speak again!

Crazy G. Queen.

Mrs. D. He knows me; he knows me.

Crazy G. My wife. (*Embracing her.*)

Bessie. Thank God! he is restored.

Mr. Sylv. God brought her to the gold mine.

(*Explosion. The rocks fall. The blast tears open the rocks, exposing the rich veins of gold.*)

Miners. The vein. The vein.

Mr. Sylv. God's hand has done it.

(*BESSIE puts her hand in SYLVESTER'S.*)

Mrs. D. (to MR. DESMOND.) Thou art more to me than all the gold within this mine.

Miners. Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

Foreman (to KITTY). You're my gold mine.

Bob. May I be turned out of church.

Bessie (to SYLVESTER). There is the hand you asked for.

Mrs. D. (to MINERS, and then turns to audience). Kind friends and smiles from those we love are better than a gold mine (*MINERS cheering*).

QUICK CURTAIN.



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